Each to his own Company

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WHEN RELEASED, WHITHER? or
c EACH TO HIS OWN COMPANY.

Acts.4:23 "And being let go, they went to their own company."

INTRO. The healing of the lame man at the Gate tiful stirred up an intense excitement in Jerusalem. It drew the crowd around the disciples and Peter lovedthe crowd, for it was an opportunity reach- and preach he did, resulting in about 5000ø accepting the new Gospel. Then followed the arrest of Peter and James and John. How nobly and bravely Peter answered the authorities- what a contrast to his attitude and conduct when Jesus was tried and when Peter denied his Lord. Well, after a severe reprimand Peter and James and John were released from custody, "And being let go, they went to their own company." Acts 4:23.

Let us take this for our text and meditate upon it until it becomes to us a spiritual message from God. It i true that we are no longer persecuted and imprisoned for our religious convictions, but for all that there are shakles which still bind us we are constrained and restrained in many ways, and when we are released we,too, go to our own company.

I. First, I think of the constraint of home.
Engirdled by love and parental discipline and control.
Then comes the time when we are released. My own experience of Brother Will telling me after mother's death that from then on I had to go and make my own way.
Then it is that one leaving home to live his own life according to his own desires and ideals goes to his own company.
Did you ever think of the story of the prodigal in this light? Being let go, he sought his own company.
In this same light Jesus as a boy in the Temple

Mary and Joseph were not the only parents who had to return to Jerusalem to seek out theyr boy Other young men were missed and other mothers fathers returned in search of them. Some were among the soldiers, and some at the bazaars. But Jesus was at the Temple.

II. Then there is the constraint of work. Thank God for the bondage of toil! We all haveour work to do. Our daily tasks. Six days a week we must labor. But after the work i done, whicher do we go? Each goes to his own company. Every night in the cities one sees to what company people go when they have finished their day's work.

Three fellows work at the same desk, in the sam office and for the same boss. But when night comes, where will you find them? What is your company when you are released from your duties? Where do you gravitate? When your work is done tomorrow say to yourself, "Now I go to my own company"- and then thank God for it, or be ashamed of yourself.

III. Then there are social restraints which make it impossible for us always to have our own way. Delicate situations in which we cannot always be as outspoken as we would like to be. Themost uncharitable persons I know are those who take pride in being candid in their statements. Often their tactless blunt remarks do infinitely more harm than good. In every walk of our social order there are compliances and silences which we all understand. And one of the hardest tasks for any man is to keep a clean conscience and an unsullied heart while bowing to the restraints of hi social world.

But we are released from such restraints in vari ious ways. Undoubtedly at our own firesides, in our own homes we are freest of all. Sweating under the restraints of some school discipline or business situation, do we go home and vent our spleen on innocent mother or sister or brother?

3. When released from such restraints, are we less kind and courteous and polite? Surely, when thus released we go to our own company!

IV. Then there is the bondage of evil habit. Take the Gadarene demoniac. His evil possession separated him from his family and friends. That is what all sin does, it separates us from our loved ones.

When the demoniac was healed, he wanted to fo follow Jesus. But his healer told him to return to his home where his wife had been praying for him and his children loved him.

The greatest blessing Christ gives us is deliverence from sin and freedom from evil, for then we can return to our own company, for the true and the good is our real company to which God would send us. We were made for goodness and tenderness, for purity and light and love. These are the true company of a God-created spirit.

V. Then lastly, there are the constraints of life it self. In our eartly existance we are cramped and cribbed. Here there is no ultimate success of any kind. Nothing is perfect here on earth. Here we are fettered and imprisoned in many ways. But when death releases the spirit we travel on to our own. Did you ever think of death like that? It is an arresting and an awful thot. When Judas committed suicide he went to his own place. How readily, nowadays we boldly declare that there is no hell. Rather than to glibly say there is no hell, dont you you think it would be far wiser to believe that when released by death, we each go to his own place?

The rich society woman who died and went to the eternal city. Mansion- her servant girl's. An humble dwelling. Whose? her own. When she protested was told that the very best house was built for her out of the material she sent up from earth.

What kind of material are you sending up for your eternal home?

God grant us all such respect and love for what is good, such kinship of heart ~~for the~~ with the brave and the pure and the lowly, such secret comradship with all who are wrestling heavenward in the living fellowship of ~~the~~ Jesus Christ that when death comes, we go to our own company at last, to be forever with the Lord!